(ख) और (ग) वर्ष 1993-94 के दौरान दो बार ट्रांसपोर्टरों की हड़ताल हुई—प्रथम हड़ताल अगस्त, 1993 के दौरान हुई थी तथा दूसरी सितम्बर, 1993 के दौरान हुई थी। हड़ताल अवधि के दौरान कोल इंडिया लि. की कुछ कम्पनियों का सड़क मार्ग से प्रेषण आंशिक रूप से प्रभावित हुआ था।

(घ) कोयला कम्पनियां देश की कोक्कर कोयले की कुल वर्तमान आवश्यकताओं को पूरा करने की स्थिति में हैं किन्तु 1992-93 तथा 1993-94 के दौरान कोयले का उठान प्रक्षिप्त मांग के पूरा न होने के कारण लक्ष्य से कम रही।

Import of Coal from Australia and South Africa

5271. DR. NAUNIHAL SINGH : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Coal India Limited is considering to import Australian and South African coal and to blend them with its product for export as one of the alternatives to boost exports;

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken so far in this direction, with details;

(c) whether it is a fact that a Government study group is currently assessing whether royalty on coal should be on *ad valorum* basis; and if that happens, will it spell further doom for Coal India Limited; and

(d) if so, how does the company envisage to meet the situation; with details ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) There has been no such formal proopsal.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) The rates of royalty on coal were last revised with effect from 1-8-1991. Next revision in the rates of royalty or coal can be effected on or after 1st August 1994. A Study Group has already been constituted by the Government to consider the matter and make recommendation to Government in this regard. Th Study Group is expected to take a balanced view after considering the needs of coal producing States for higher revenues as well as impact of increased rates of royalty on coal consumers and coal industry.

Useless Coal Mines in Bihar

5272. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of open cast and underground coal mines have become useless in the State of Bihar;

(b) if so,what are the details thereof; and

(c) what steps have been taken by Government to make alternative use of these useless coal mines and the land thereof in Bihar ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) to (c) According to information furnished by Coal India Ltd. (CIL), a total of twenty mines have been closed in Bihar since nationalisation. The coal company-wise details are as follows :

Coal company & No. of mines closed

ECL—1
BCCL—11
CCL—8

Wherever possible, the closed mines are being reorganised/merged with bigger mines. Mines closed for safety reasons